

THE
BLIND MAN'S FOLLY
DISCOVERED.

By S. R.
—K

*In holy Scripture we may read,
If blind Guides undertake to lead
Blind men, in pit both fall at last,
And then repent when time is past.
Matth. 15. 14.*

*Friend, if thou wilt this Book peruse,
Or lend an Ear unto my Muse,
Thou may'st not count thy labour lost,
Much less bethink the time it cost:
A Truth unto thee I shall tell,
Which thou may'st hear, and do right well,*

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THere was a man that fain would make
A Journey great, but first would take
Some counsel, to the end that he
Might safe arrive where he would be :
The place unknown, the Journey far,
Within himself was at a dar
What way to take, what path to go,
Whether East or West he did not know.

In this sad case unto him came
A man renowned for his fame ;
In black Array, yet having on
A Linen Robe, that 'twas upon :
His Loins were strongly girt about ;
He was a Priest, I make no doubt :
In Arts and Parts he did excell ;
What else beside, 'tis shame to tell.
This man, I say, was very free
To give direction speedily.
*The place (said he) then let me know,
To which thou hast a mind to go.*

Heaven is the place (*the Trav'ler said*)
 That I would go to, but afraid
 I am to venture, till I find
 A Guide most faithful to my mind.

What man will please thee? (then said he)
I am a Guide, accept of me :
Thou need'st not fear, I know right well
The way to Heaven, and can tell
What course thou must henceforward take,
That a good Journey thou mayst make ;
And if thou wilt be rul'd by me,
From all thy doubts I'll set thee free.

At this right joyful was the man,
 That will to Heaven, if he can ;
 And blest himself, that in his need
 He met with such a Guide indeed.
O happy learned Friend, (said he)
You are the man, the man for me ;
I'll take your counsel and advice,
You shall in no wise bid me twice.
Speak on, dear Sir, that I may know
The way to Heaven how to go :
The place I hear is hard to find,
To travel to't I have a mind :
I shall not count my labour lost,
When I come there, what e'er it cost.
Heaven is a place of Joy and Rest,
All Persons therefore must be blest

That

*That thither go : then shew to me
How I that Place at last might see.*

P R I E S T.

Friend, If thou wilt a Journey make
To Heaven, then my good Counsel take,
Which if thou wilt observe throughout,
Thither thou'lt go, I make no doubt.

First, A Conformist thou must be
Unto our Church and Lyurgy ;
To Common-Prayer thou must go :
This is the safest way I know.

And sith our Church hath many days
That were ordain'd for Feasts and Plays,
On them no labour do, I say,
Lest for so doing dear thou pay.
Thy Parish-Church be sure to keep,
(The place where many use to sleep.)
Let not thy mind a gadding go
To hear Phanaticks ; then I know
Thou soon wilt erre, and come to nought,
And unto Hell at last be brought.

The Customs that have heretofore
In *England* been, which are great store,
See thou remember and observe ;
Let not thy mind from these e'er swerve.
Some Oaths there must be sworn by thee,
Allegiance and Supremacy ;

And if our Parliament shall make
Some Laws for more, thou must them take.
And don't dispute the matter then,
Except thou'rt wiser then all men.
At any time, if thou shalt know
Where Conventiclers use to go,
(For such there are, that night and day
In private oft do preach and pray)
See thou be ready at all times
To bring to light such hainous Crimes :
And when such men convicted be,
Let them to Goal be led by thee.
Both Christmass, Easter, Whitsontide,
See thou observe ; though some deride
The observation of such times,
And count them as enormous Crimes.
When Children are brought forth to thee,
Thou know'st their state in Infancy ;
Bring them to me, that I may make
Them Kirsen Souls for Christ his sake.
Let Wife to Church with Kerchief go,
And Offerings bring, else she will know
Our Church will frown, and take it ill
That she should disobey their will.
Once in a year see thou receive
The Sacrament, and don't deceive
Thy self of that advantage great,
Which thou wilt lose, except thou eat.
Remember

Remember then my Easter-Book,
Wherein I much delight to look ;
And him that doth not largely give,
I count unworthy for to live.
If Lambs thou hast in number ten,
See that I have the best of them :
If Pigs, or Calves, or other thing
Thou dost possess, the Tythe then bring.
What Corn thou hast, see that I have
The tenth of all, which I do crave.
Obey the King, and all the men
That under him do rule ; and then
thou need'st not fear what comes at last
Of thy poor Soul, when life is past.
What I have said, I dare to say,
To Heaven is the nearest way.

But that thou may'st more chearful go
In this straight path, I'll let thee know
Our Church doth give much liberty
In things which some do much deny.
When Bulls, or Bears, or Cocks do fight,
Thou may'st in this thy self delight :
If hunting, hawking thou dost love,
Our Church of it doth well approve.
For Cards and Dice, and other Game,
At which to play, though some count shame ;
Yet if thou wilt my counsel take,
Such sports to use, no scruple make.

6 *The Blind Mans Folly discover'd.*

If thou dost swear, drink healths, or curse,
Most men will like thee ne'er the worse.
When thou do'st see a handsome Maid,
To court her then be not afraid.
We count that this no scandal brings,
Most of us love such pretty things.
When *May-day* comes, and *Flora's* sport
Is in request, thou may'st resort
Unto't, and what doth in thee lie,
Keep up Dame *Flora's* memory.
When Drums do beat, and Trumpets sound,
When Bonfires flame the Countrey round;
When Bells put forth their pleasant voice,
Thou may'st hoop, hollow, and rejoyce:
Such things as these do best become
Such seasons, though contemn'd by some.
At Christmas-time, Friend, thou may'st chuse
Whether thou'lt ought but pleasures use;
For Pastimes then are most in fashion,
And we account them Recreation:
Thou may'st drink freely, and carouse,
And keep a gallant open house:
The more thou do'st in this abound,
Thy name both far and near shall sound.
What sweet advantages are these,
To make thee travel with much ease?
And never fail of heaven at last,
That quits the cost of labour past,

One great advantage more thoult find,
Which was almost slipt out of mind :
If thou dost chance at any time
For to commit some grievous Crime ;
Our Church can pardon quite as well
As he that now at *Rome* doth dwell ;
The Pope I mean ; and pardons free
We can afford, as cheap as he.
Observe then well what I have said,
Keep on thy Journey, ben't afraid :
I make no doubt but thou wilt find
Content at last unto thy mind.

There are some persons that do say,
To Heav'n there is a better way :
They are Phanaticks that so teach,
And constantly such Doctrines preach ;
Of such beware, such Teachers shun,
Or else for ever thou'rt undone.

But here a question may arise,
How I can them characterize :
To th' end thou may'st such persons know,
Some never-fayling marks I'll show :

First, All the men that much deny
Our Churches Orders, and despise
Those Ceremonies that abound,
And Customes that with us are found.
Next when thou hear'st men preach or pray
Without Book, then conclude, I say,

They

They are Phanaticks, and desie
 Our goodly Forms and Lyrurgy.
 When Boys and Men do sweetly sing,
 When Organs play, or Bells do ring;
 This seems no more in such mens eye,
 Then if some Dogs or Pigs did cry.
 Some out of *Revelations* preach,
 And some from *Daniel's* Book do teach:
 Beware of such, take heed of those;
 To Church and State I count them foes.
 Those holy Garments that we use
 In our Church-Service, some refuse.
 The Cross in Baptism, some desie;
 And Infant-sprinkling some deny.
 Some want the Tongues, and yet will preach;
 Some ben't Ordain'd, and yet will teach.
 The Cov'nant some will not abjure,
 And other Oaths some cann't endure.
 Some on our Church cast much disgrace,
 And do oppose us to our face.
 Nay, some do call us Priests of *Baal*,
 As if we had no grace all:
 And if to Court they cited be,
 To pay their Fees they are not free.
 Our Laws to break, no Conscience make;
 No Admonition will they take.
 Such men as these, if thou dost know,
 Look on each of them as thy foe.

Some

Some don't allow of Sports and Plays,
Nor yet observe our holy Days.
Some do disown Lord Bishops all,
And some do pray that *Rome* may fall.
Some to our Laws contempt do show,
And unto private Meetings go.
Some Tythe refuse ; some will not pay
Their Dues and Offerings : such, I say,
Take special heed of, and beware,
Lest thou be caught within their snare.
To drink good Healths some do refuse,
And Scripture chiefly some peruse ;
Whate'er to that doth not agree,
They will not own for verity.
Nay, when that we do feast and play,
Some persons do both preach and pray.
Some men do most precisely walk,
And still do most divinely talk :
When such thou seest, remember me ;
They are Phanaticks certainly.
These are the Wolves that do destroy ;
These are the Foxes that anoy
Poor tender Lambs ; then have a care,
And of such persons still beware :
Refrain them all, else ten to one,
Thou'lt lose thy way, and be undone.

Your Counsel's good, (the Trav'ler said)
And what before me you have laid,

*I will observe, and take good heed,
That in my Journey I may speed,
To that good place where all are blest
That find at last eternal Rest.*

Now Reader, if thou'lt lend an ear
To me a while, then thou may'st hear
What came of this poor man at last,
That hearkned to the Counsel past.

So soon as Priest was gone his way,
He made some progress every day,
To th' end he might at length obtain
What he desir'd, though 'twas in vain.
With Common-Prayer he began,
And unto all the rest he ran.
For his most strict Conformity,
Advanc'd he was to honour high.
All Dues and Duties still he paid;
He well observ'd what Priest had said.
On popish Days he did abstain,
And from all labour did refrain:
His Church he kept, and oft receiv'd
What Priest did give, which him deceiv'd,
There were no Oaths but he could swear,
And all things else he well could bear.
In him much Zeal there did abound,
And Constancy in him was found,
So soon as any he did know
That did to private Meetings go;

Against

Against them forthwith he complain'd,
Such work as this he ne'er refrain'd.
The Laws of Men he well observ'd,
From their Commands he never swerv'd.
Such Zeal in him there did appear,
That sounded out both far and near.
He was a Gamster much renown'd,
In sports and plays he did abound.
He could drink freely, swear and curse,
And never think himself the worse.
All pagan popish Customs vain,
He did observe and still maintain.
When Maids or Women he did see,
If they were chaste, then they must flee,
And haste away out of his sight,
Else he'd abuse them if he might.
His great excessive lust did swell
To such a height 'tis shame to tell.
His rage was much against all those
That sinful courses did oppose.
When time call'd *Christmas* did draw near,
He made Provision for good Chear ;
And all that came unto his house
With him must eat, drink and carouse.
He drank such *Healts*, and *Healts* again,
That Health and he at length were twain.
He then complain'd he was not well,
And what to do he could not tell :

His

His mirth and joy did soon depart,
And sadness then possess'd his Heart.
His Wife and Friends did him bemoane,
And would have eas'd him, had they known
What course to take ; but all's in vain,
His Body did abound with pain.
O call Physician, (then said he)
And let him haste away to me :
Which soon was done, for no delay
Might here be made ; but when, I say,
Physician came, he did perceive
That he of life must take his leave :
Dear Sir, (said he) I must you tell,
Your state I like not very well ;
Wherefore, if you'll be rul'd by me,
Set house in order instantly :
For all the Symptoms do appear,
That speak of Death's approaching near.
At this he wept and grieved sore,
This made his pains encrease the more :
Alas poor I ! that now must die,
And pass into Eternity.
O call the Parson, (then said he)
That he may come and pray for me.
The Priest made haste, and came away,
And to this Man did Prayers say,
Which in his Book appointed were,
And for that use inserted there.

This means made not his pains to cease,
But rather more and more encrease.

The Priest then to the sick man said,

O Sir, be not at all dismayd :

In all your doubts I'll you resolve,

Of all your sins I'll you absolve.

I hope you have observed well

What sometime since I did you tell ;

Which if you have, then never fear ;

Take Courage then, be of good cheer,

Of Death, good Sir, be not afraid,

Nor at your Change be you dismayd ;

Though pains be sharp and mighty strong,

Yet there's some hope they'l not be long :

For when your mortal life shall cease,

Your Soul shall have eternal Peace ;

From all your labour you shall rest,

With glory great you shall be blest.

At this the sick man did revive,

And in his Spirit he seem'd alive ;

But still his Body did remain

Oppressed sore with grievous pain.

The Priest moreover spake and said,

To th' end, good Sir, you ben't afraid

Of Death that is approaching near,

Take Bread and Wine your Soul to cheer :

And lest that any doubt remain

Upon your Heart, let me again

*Of Sin absolve you, that you may
 Be freed from doubtings night and day;
 That when you do this life depart,
 You may go hence with joyful heart.*
 All this was done, but yet no ease
 Was brought him by such things as these :
 His pains increased, and grew strong ;
 His Breath grew short, his torments long :
 At length grim Death approached nigh,
 And told him that he now must die.
 Which when he saw he could not shun,
 He cry'd, *Alas ! I am undone :*
 And afterward he soon perceiv'd
 That this Blind Priest had him deceiv'd :
 His Bread and Wine did not avail,
 His Absolution did him fail.
 Though he conform'd to Church and State,
 He cry'd *Alas*, when 'twas too late.

Now Reader mark what there befel
 To this poor wretch that went to Hell :
 He that in cursing did delight,
 Is cursed now both day and night ;
 He that in pleasures did abound,
 Hath after death much sorrow found ;
 He that in life-time did rejoyce,
 Knows nothing now but weeping voice ;
 He that in bonds caus'd Saints to lie,
 In chains of darkness now must die ;

He that would then no pity know,
Must now himself no mercy know:
He that did leave the Fatherless,
And Widows too, in great distress;
Finds now himself what 'tis to bear
A parting from Relations dear.
What folly did this man possess,
Before the time of his distress?
For then he thought it might be well
With him at last, yet went to Hell;
Where now he lies tormented sore,
And must remain for evermore.
His Members all, that Servants were
To Satan, now Gods wrath do bear.
His head, that had so oft contriv'd;
His hands, that had so oft depriv'd
God's People of what was their due;
Do pay for all, both old and new.
His feet that did to Sin make haste,
Do suffer now for mischiefs past.
His heart also that did devise
Much evil on his Bed, now lies
In torments great; his tongue also
The wrath of God doth undergo:
His lustful and his wanton eyes
Have now their share of pain likewise.
His head, his heart, his hands and feet,
Do now receive rewards most meet:

For in eternal pains they lie,
 And must in flames for ever fry.
 Cold water now to him doth seem
 Of greater worth in his esteem,
 Then all the wine that heretofore
 He drank in waste, which was great store.
 The sports that in his life he us'd,
 The Creatures that he then abus'd,
 The pleasures that he did enjoy,
 The thoughts of these now him annoy.
 In this sad case he cast his eye,
 And *Dives*-like, did soon espy
 Some Saints in Heav'n, that heretofore
 Had been afflicted very sore,
 But now advanc'd to honour high,
 Which added to his misery.
 He wisht for ease, but pains remain;
 He wisht for death, but all in vain.
 Then he, poor wretch, did much bemoan
 Himself, but yet no help was shown:
 He wept, he waild, he did complain;
 He gnasht his teeth for his great pain:
 He wrung his hands, and curs'd the day
 When first he heard what Priest did say:
 He curs'd the Guide that him deceiv'd,
 That had his Soul of Life bereav'd:
 He curs'd the Priest that him abus'd,
 And all the Worship that he us'd.

He curs'd the Counsel that he gave,
Which he embrac'd his Soul to save:
He curs'd the Pope, and all the days
That he set forth for Feasts and Plays.
He curs'd the hour when he began
To take advice from this blind man.

Now Reader, next I will thee tell
What unto this blind Priest befel;
Who, when unto a Feast he came,
He fed so freely at the same,
And drank such draughts of Beer and Wine,
'Tis shame to mention at this time:
He ate and drank so much at last,
He lost the health he had time past.
Much means was us'd, but all in vain;
His grievous sickness did remain:
Physicians came, but more and more
His pains encreased very sore:
At length he dy'd, and soon did fly
From hence into Eternity.
If thou wilt know his state at last,
It was the same with him that's past:
For when he thought to have receiv'd
True Joy at last, he was deceiv'd.
It sat'd alike with these two men,
Both did to Hell descend. But when
The Prince of Darknes did espy
Blind Priest in *Tophet*, he did cry;

You'r welcome, Sir, unto the place
 Where all do come that want true Grace :
 The choicest Room that hath least ease,
 You may command, Sir, if you please.
 The Service great that you have done,
 The many Souls that you have won ;
 Do still engage me to remain
 Your Servant to augment your pain.
 The Superstition you have us'd,
 The Truths that you have oft abus'd :
 The Sermons that you read, have bin
 Of great advantage unto Sin.
 Your Singing-Service was of use ;
 Your Sacraments did Vice produce ;
 Your Organs that did seldom cease,
 Unto my Kingdom brought increase :
 Your human Arts and Warts likewise,
 Have always serv'd to blind mens Eyes.
 Your stopping of the Mouths of those
 That to my Kingdom were great Foes ;
 Your constant walking in all Sin,
 To me hath great advantage bin.
 Your goodly Robes have some deceiv'd ;
 Your Doctrines false I have perceiv'd
 Have to Destruction brought great store,
 To be tormented evermore.
 Your Actions all, I must confess
 Have much promoted Wickedness :

Your

Your Servant therefore I will be,
To plague you to Eternity.

When Beelzebub had ceas'd, then said
The Man that was by Priest betray'd;
How happy now might I have been,
If I thy face had never seen!
Thou cursed Guide, thou Friend of Hell,
Didst thou not say thou knew'st right well
The Path unto eternal Rest,
The way how all men might be blest?
But O what numbers here do lie,
That justly may against thee cry!
Thy lying Words have us deceiv'd;
Thy cursed Doctrine hath bereav'd
Our Souls of all the Joy that we
Might else have had eternally.
O that I could my Friends advise!
O that they all might be more wise,
Then I, poor Wretch, that now must lie
In burning flames, but never die.

Now Reader, If thou'lt counsel take,
All such blind Priests do thou forsake;
From sinful courses still refrain,
And lying Guides see thou disdain:
But love all those that Truth do tell,
And those in whom true Grace doth dwell.

The

The narrow way do thou embrace;
 To walk therein count no disgrace:
 Make Christ thy Captain, Leader too;
 And then amiss thou shalt not do.
 Chuse him for thy most faithful Guide,
 No ill to thee shall then betide.
 Thou shalt not fail of Rest and Peace,
 And Glory too, that shall not cease.
 All other Ways and Guides at last
 Do lead to Hell when life is past.
 Let all those therefore that peruse
 These Lines of mine, Blind Guides refuse:
 Left for true Rest, they Tophet gain;
 And weep and wail when 'tis in vain.

FINIS.



